

# TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS

## OF THE

### GUISBOROUGH URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

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Gentlemen,

I beg to submit my Annual Report for the year 1940 which, in accordance with the instructions of the Minister of Health, is confined to essential and urgent matters which have affected the public health.

The population is estimated to have fallen slightly; the birth-rate, the death-rate, and the infant mortality rate all show a perceptible increase above the average 1934-38 rates, this rise being most definite in the death-rate—15·9, as against an average of 12·7,—which was associated with severe weather in the early months of the year, and increased deaths from respiratory diseases.

The only notifiable diseases to show an increased prevalence were pneumonia, cerebro-spinal fever and dysentery; all the others were less frequent than usual. The outbreak of dysentery was of the mild Sonne form and occurred in the Joint Isolation Hospital in the first week of December. Two patients there convalescent from diphtheria started with diarrhoea on November 30th; on December 1st dysentery was suspected and specimens sent to the College of Medicine Laboratory, Newcastle, for examination, report being received on December 5th that *B. Dysenteriae Sonne* was present. Two more cases arose on December 1st, two more on December 3rd, a further one on December 4th and a final case on December 7th. Recovery in all cases was rapid and uneventful. A patient discharged from the hospital on December 2nd on recovery from Paratyphoid *B. Fever* had been earlier found, while in hospital, to be a carrier of *B. Dysenteriae Sonne*.

Eight cases of Cerebro-spinal fever were notified; this prevalence was shared by the adjoining districts and the country as a whole. In the Combined Districts a total of 32 cases were notified, but in one of these the diagnosis was later corrected to tuberculous meningitis. In addition to these, three additional cases were brought into the districts for hospital treatment. Most cases occurred in the second quarter of the year, when 14 cases arose; in 12 the onset was in the first quarter, 5 in the 3rd, and 3 in the last quarter. The month of highest incidence was May, with nine cases.

The two sexes were almost equally attacked, 18 being male, and 16 female, but the age incidence in the two sexes differed:

Age:	Under 5	5—14	15—19	20—24	25—34	35—44	45—54	55—64
Male:	2	3	5	7	1	—	—	—
Female:	5	3	2	1	1	1	1	2

Sixteen cases were regarded as severe, 8 male and 8 female; two males in the 20-24 age group and one female under 5 died. One girl of 16 years was left with complete nerve deafness. Cases were treated with lumbar puncture, sulphonamide or sulphopyridine, and antimeningococcic serum.

Cases of Food-Poisoning were made compulsorily notifiable by registered medical practitioners by the Food and Drugs Act of 1938; the first two cases under this were notified in May. They were slight and had recovered by the time enquiry could be made.

Circular 2230, on Diphtheria Prophylaxis, was issued by the Minister of Health on December 7th, 1940, wherein the value of the immunisation of children in the prevention of diphtheria was emphasised. A local scheme for the free immunisation of children against diphtheria had received the approval of the Minister at the end of 1934 but he now intimated that the immunising toxoid could be obtained by Local Authorities free of charge. Medical Practitioners were circularised on the subject, and publicity obtained through the press and the elementary schools, the head teachers of which have always given every assistance. Reference was made at some length in last year's Annual Report to the progress made locally in immunisation. The following table brings the information as to numbers of children protected in the Combined Districts up-to-date:—

#### Children Immunised Against Diphtheria.

		Guisborough U.D.	Loftus U.D.	Redcar Borough	Saltburn and Marske U.D.	Skelton and Brotton U.D.
1935—1939	...	407	342	1228	473	323
1940	...	29	—	59	151	139
First half 1941	...	84	72	330	110	151
Total immunised						
1935—30/6/1941	...	520	414	1617	734	621
Estimated total number of children aged 1—9 years old in 1941	...	880	826	3340	640	1516
Percentage immunised		59%	50%	48½%	115%	41%

Some of the children immunised in the earlier years are now over nine years old so that the estimate, in the last line of the table, of the present percentage of children at these ages immunised is an over-estimate, but, at any rate, the table will serve to show the minimum number of children in each district that still require to be immunised before a tolerably perfect protection against diphtheria can be obtained.

It is perhaps too early as yet to endeavour to draw from local statistics any evidence of the amount of protection against diphtheria afforded by immunisation. The following figures, however, are given as a temporary estimate. In the Combined Districts from 1935 until the end of 1939, 2,773 children had been immunised; in 1940 there were approximately 10,303 children in these districts over one year old and under

fifteen. If one assumes that all the children immunised had remained in the district it follows that there were roughly 7,530 children at 1—14 years of age not immunised. In 1940 there were among immunised children two cases of diphtheria (a rate of 0·7 cases per thousand) and among non-immunised children at these ages forty cases (5·3 cases per thousand). It would seem therefore as if immunisation had reduced the risk of catching diphtheria by six-sevenths. The two cases in immunised children recovered without causing anxiety; among the non-immunised children there were four deaths—or a fatality rate of ten per cent.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

C. R. GIBSON,

Medical Officer of Health.

Guisborough,

16th September, 1941.

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### Vital Statistics for 1940:

Population, estimated for mid-1940 by Registrar-General: 7,676.

Number of births, 135; birth-rate 17·6.

(Average 1934—38: 133; birth-rate 16·6).

Number of deaths of residents, 122; death-rate 15·9.

(Average 1934—1938: 101; death-rate 12·7).

Infant Mortality Rate: 64 infant deaths per thousand births.

Average 1934—38: 46½.

Notifications received: Pneumonia, 26; scarlet fever, 7; diphtheria, 2; cerebro-spinal fever, 8; dysentery, 8; puerperal pyrexia, 4; erysipelas, 4; measles, 9; whooping cough, 2; food-poisoning, 2.

Tuberculosis (new cases): 8 pulmonary; 1 non-pulmonary.

